

HTML Colors

Colors make a page fun. Colors can be set as modifiers in the opening body, table, table header, and table data tags. Colors can be set for the background, text, and three stages of link use in the body tag, while background and text colors can be set in the three levels of table tags. The modifiers are:

- * "bgcolor=xxxxxx" for the background color
- * "text=xxxxxx" for the text color
- * "link=xxxxxx" for the link color
- * "alink=xxxxxx" for the active link color (as it is being pressed)
- * "vlink=xxxxxx" for the visited link color (a link that already has been visited at least once).

Accordingly, a body tag might be modified this way: <body bgcolor=000000 text=ffffff link=0099ff alink=9900ff vlink=ff9900>.

Colors are indicated by a hexadecimal code composed of six digits, with the first two indicating the intensity of the red, the next two the intensity of the color green, and the last two the intensity of blue in the color mixture. Red, Green, and Blue are the primary colors of light (not to be confused with CYMK, where cyan [blue], yellow, and magenta [red] are the physical colors of toner [and paint] pigments). Each pair of digits indicating red, green or blue are divided into 16 segments that range from "0," where the color is totally absent, to "F," where the color is up to full force. So, the levels of intensity range from 0-9, then use the first six letters of the alphabet for the last six digits. The first digit in each pair is the base color level for that color, while the second letter provides gradations within each of the base color levels. So, one can have a total of 256 color gradations for each of the three color levels (16x16), and an overall potential color palette of over 16 million color gradations across all three colors ranging from 000000 to FFFFFFFF.

The color chart below (on the next page), gives some idea of the color spreads by first showing "Progressions" of the color within each color in the top section, while showing Blends in the lower section. Feel free to experiment with mixing color blends on your page yourself.

Background colors also can be used as a modifier with table tags and for th and td tags.

Background Image

A background image is added with the body tag modifier background=dogs.gif. If the background image has a transparent color, the bgcolor will show through. Background images must be used carefully, though. Many images are too "busy" and makes text hard to read. Others may have differing colors in various parts of the picture that make colors difficult to read. Small background images will "tile."

Font Colors

The text modifier in the body sets the color of the text throughout the body. However, one can make some modifications to text using the xxx tags. Size can be changed, as well. So, to make a larger text in yellow (for example) color use Large Yellow text. Note that font moves up or down in size by indicating plus, or minus, steps – up to 7 steps total, either way.

Consider the readability test following the color chart to ensure text/font/link colors and background work together well.

HTML	440000	004400	000044	444400	004444	440044	444444
	440000	004400	000044	444400	004444	440044	444444
Color	660000	006600	000066	666600	006666	660066	666666
	660000	006600	000066	666600	006666	660066	666666
Tables	880000	008800	000088	888800	008888	880088	888888
	880000	008800	000088	888800	008888	880088	888888
Progressions	AA0000	00AA00	0000AA	AAAA00	00AAAA	AA00AA	AAAAAA
	AA0000	00AA00	0000AA	AAAA00	00AAAA	AA00AA	AAAAAA
	CC0000	00CC00	0000CC	CCCC00	00CCCC	CC00CC	CCCCCC
	CC0000	00CC00	0000CC	CCCC00	00CCCC	CC00CC	CCCCCC
Blends	EE0000	00EE00	0000EE	EEEE00	00EEEE	EE00EE	EEEEEE
	EE0000	00EE00	0000EE	EEEE00	00EEEE	EE00EE	EEEEEE
	FF0000	00FF00	0000FF	FFFF00	00FFFF	FF00FF	FFFFFF
	FF0000	00FF00	0000FF	FFFF00	00FFFF	FF00FF	FFFFFF
	1177FF	FF7711	11FF77	77FF11	7711FF	FF1177	123456
	1177FF	FF7711	11FF77	77FF11	7711FF	FF1177	123456
	3399CC	CC3399	99CC33	CC9933	33CC99	9933CC	654321
	3399CC	CC3399	99CC33	CC9933	33CC99	9933CC	654321
	55BBEE	BB55EE	BBEE55	55EEBB	EEBB55	EE55BB	789ABC
	55BBEE	BB55EE	BBEE55	55EEBB	EEBB55	EE55BB	789ABC
	77DD00	DD7700	DD0077	7700DD	00DD77	0077DD	CBA876
	77DD00	DD7700	DD0077	7700DD	00DD77	0077DD	CBA876
	99FF22	9922FF	FF9922	FF2299	2299FF	22FF99	DEF012
	99FF22	9922FF	FF9922	FF2299	2299FF	22FF99	DEF012
	BB1144	BB4411	1144BB	11BB44	44BB11	4411BB	210FED
	BB1144	BB4411	1144BB	11BB44	44BB11	4411BB	210FED
	DD3366	DD6633	6633DD	66DD33	3366DD	33DD66	345678
	DD3366	DD6633	6633DD	66DD33	3366DD	33DD66	345678
	FF5588	FF8855	8855FF	88FF55	55FF88	5588FF	876543
	FF5588	FF8855	8855FF	88FF55	55FF88	5588FF	876543
	112233	113322	221133	223311	332211	331122	9ABCDE
	112233	113322	221133	223311	332211	331122	9ABCDE
	445566	446655	554466	556644	665544	664455	EDCBA9
	445566	446655	554466	556644	665544	664455	EDCBA9

Readability

To ensure that there is adequate contrast between text (and link) colors and a background color, use this simple test.

1. Take 1, 3, 5 digits from the each color code
2. Convert letters to numbers (A=10, B=11, C=12, D=13, E=14, F=15 -- remember that although this is a 16 digit spectrum, the spectrum starts with the digit "0" instead of "1," so there still are 16 digits even though the value for the highest is 15)
3. Add the three digits from each color code to get the brightness value for the background and the text underconsideration.
4. The variance between the brightness value of the background and the text should be 15 or higher.